

Exhibit No. 3Date 1/30/2015Bill No. SB 217

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman,

My name is Sarah Boyce and I am from Havre. I am here to testify about a situation that I encountered in attempting to get the birth certificate for my new born child. In 2013 I gave birth to our son at home. After he was born, I went in to get the paperwork from the Clerk and Recorder's office in Havre to get his birth certificate. As I was looking over the birth certificate form, they told me how important it was to get all the information just right or I would need to start the form all over again. Because of this fact, I asked the gal in the office of the Clerk and Recorder's office for help.

She led me to a table and we filled out the top portion of the birth certificate, line by line together. She was very courteous and helpful. When we got down to the portion on the form where they ask lots of questions about my husband's background as well as mine, how much we make, birth experience details, and other various questions, the gal told me that it was not mandatory and that I had the right to "opt" out on the questionnaire, as it was solely for statistical information. So, I told her that I would in fact like to opt out. I do believe in a "free" country with rights to privacy, so I was grateful that she was not insisting on the bottom portion, as it didn't seem to apply simply to obtaining a birth certificate for my child. I did notice that the birth certificate form had carbon copies on the required top section, but not on the bottom part. The gal ripped my copy from the form, gave it to me and then she gladly took the rest of the paperwork with the required information that appears on the birth certificate to have it sent off through the proper channels to be processed into the state system. I thanked her and went on my way.

Sometime in the weeks to follow, I got a call from this same gal who had helped me fill out the form in Havre, saying that the form was being rejected because it was not completely filled out. This perplexed me, as it was the Havre office that had told me it was optional in the first place. When I asked her about it, she said that she was sorry for the confusion and that she had been told that it was originally voluntary, but that she guessed it must have gotten changed. I said that I was still pretty firm in not wanting to fill out the questionnaire and she said that she would check with Helena again to see if there was any way around it, or if I was going to have to fill out a new form. I thanked her for letting me know, but I was pretty confused by the inconsistency of what I was being told.

She called back and stated that the Helena office was insisting that this part be filled out, or I wouldn't be able to receive a birth certificate for my child. I then asked if there was a name and number that I could call to inquire further about the issue. Before I called the state, I called a family friend who has also delivered her babies at home and asked if they had come across this situation before. When they said that they indeed had, I asked them to share their experience and what they did to proceed with acquiring a birth certificate without filling out the statistical portion. Once they finished telling me their testimony, they gave me the number of the lady in the Helena office that they had called to get the matter cleared up. They did mention that, in their situation, they had informed the state that they would be willing to have their lawyer get ahold of them if the need should arise. Our family friends were convinced that the law does not state that the questionnaire portion of the form be mandatory in receiving a birth certificate. They were able to get their birth certificate for their child without any further hassle.

I am not typically the type of person that will rock the boat unless I feel it is necessary, and I was aware that by pursuing this issue, I may be creating a conflict. But I have also been taught the importance of standing firm for personal rights, so that we don't end up losing them. So, although I was nervous of what might follow, I proceeded in the process of calling the Helena office to see what I needed to do.

Before I called, my husband and I did some research of our own on what the law requires, so that I could be prepared when I called. In our research, we found in several places, that the law was calling the questionnaire portion optional.

The Helena office and I had a series of conversations and I cannot recall, now, exactly what was said in each conversation, but I do know that they became less impressed with my persistence in the matter with each phone call and it did come down to me saying that I would be willing to involve my lawyer if need be. They said that they would have their lawyer contact my lawyer, then, and I believe that I did give them the number of our lawyer at that time. However, our lawyers never did speak to one another, and pretty soon a social security card showed up in the mail for our son. So, I knew that they had decided to process the form regardless of their reluctance initially to do so.

I was thankful for this, but I was also confused by how they were able to process it, when they were adamant that they were in need of the entire form in order to process my son's birth certificate. What had changed? The entire experience left me a bit frustrated with the process. There seemed to be a lack of communication between everyone involved in the situation and I believe that this was caused by the obvious lack of clarity in the law for what is required when trying to receive a birth certificate for a new born child. I believe that this lack of clarity was the culprit in creating undue frustration in this process, not only for me, but for the others in the office as well. I do not blame them for trying to do their jobs, but I also felt like I was being forced to believe that the form in its entirety was mandatory in order to receive a birth certificate. When it was all said and done, we hadn't filled out the entire form and our case hadn't gone to the lawyers, yet, we were able to get the birth certificate anyways.

After sharing my birth certificate experience with Kris Hansen, she began looking into it and she thought that it would be worthwhile to get the law changed, to clarify what is required in order to receive a birth certificate for a child and I agree. I came today, not to point fingers at any person, but instead to tell my story, in hopes that it will inspire the change necessary to clarify the law-to help alleviate any future confusion and frustration on all accounts.

Thank you for your time and for allowing me the opportunity to share my story. I pray that it is helpful to you in your decision making. Have a nice day. Thank you.